

Reach PLC

Annual Statement to the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO)¹

For the period

1 January to 31 December 2020

¹Pursuant to Regulation 43 and Annex A of the IPSO Regulations (The Regulations: <https://www.ipso.co.uk/media/1240/regulations.pdf>) and Clause 3.3.7 of the Scheme Membership Agreement (SMA: <https://www.ipso.co.uk/media/1292/ipso-scheme-membership-agreement-2016-for-website.pdf>)

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1. Foreword

The reporting period covers 1 January to 31 December 2020 (“the Relevant Period”).

2. Overview

Reach PLC (Reach) is the largest news publisher in the UK.

Formerly known as Trinity Mirror PLC (Trinity Mirror), the company changed its name following the acquisition of publishing assets of Northern & Shell Media Group Limited in 2018.

Trinity Mirror was formed in 1999 by the merger of Trinity PLC and Mirror Group PLC. In November 2015, Trinity Mirror acquired Local World Ltd. Local World had been incorporated on 7 January 2013 following the merger between Northcliffe Media and Iliffe News and Media.

The company integrated its editorial complaints handling, compliance and training protocols for its newly acquired Northern and Shell titles from January 1 2019. As many procedures and policies inherited from Trinity Mirror PLC are unchanged, much of the 2020 report repeats the content of previous reports.

2.1 Publications & Editorial Content

During the Relevant Period, Reach published 11 National Newspapers, 172 Regional Newspapers (with associated magazines, apps and supplements as applicable) and 56 websites. Some websites continued to merge into the “Live” brand during this period. A full list of Reach’s publications for the Relevant Period is attached to this document².

3. Responsible Person³

Reach’s Responsible Person is Paul Mottram.

² See 5.1 Annex A

³ Pursuant to Clause 3.3.9 of the SMA

(<https://www.ipso.co.uk/media/1292/ipso-scheme-membership-agreement-2016-for-website.pdf>)

4. Reach

4.1 Editorial Standards⁴

The maintenance of high editorial standards is at the core of Reach's business. All editorial staff are contractually bound to adhere to the Editors' Code of Practice ("the Code") by the terms of their employment. Furthermore, all agencies and freelancers, who supply us with editorial material are required to comply with the Code.

As a mark of its commitment to the maintenance of such standards and to acknowledge and address the difficulties that are presented in the everyday course of fast-paced current events journalism, Reach's (then Trinity Mirror's) Board issued the following Risk Appetite Statement to senior management in April 2015:

[Reach] has no appetite for behaviours, past or present, that constitute a breach of IPSO's Editors' Code of Practice.

Reach has no appetite for behaviours or decisions that knowingly lead to the publication of inaccurate, misleading or distorted information.

We are committed to doing business in accordance with IPSO's Editors' Code of Practice. The Group recognises that protecting the rights of the individual consistently comes into conflict with the public's right to know and acknowledge that, as a consequence, we will have to make difficult judgements which are impossible to get right all of the time.

Reach has little appetite for errors or misjudgements in the normal course of business, but as stated above, the Group recognises that the business of publishing information – particularly when it is done quickly in the digital environment - brings with it a level of risk that mistakes will occur. However, the Group will continually seek improvements to its behaviours, processes and systems in order to ensure that the risk of errors is mitigated and that the correct judgements are made in balancing the rights of the individual and the rights of the public to know.

⁴ Pursuant to Clause 3.3.1 to 3.3.3 of the SMA
(<https://www.ipso.co.uk/media/1292/ipso-scheme-membership-agreement-2016-for-website.pdf>)

Pre-publication Guidance from IPSO

We have had occasion to consult with IPSO and, historically, the PCC over pre-publication guidance, primarily with “borderline” judgments involving the privacy of photographs etc. We have also consulted over issues such as the updating of stories with new information when there is an outstanding IPSO complaint.

IPSO Notices

Notices and warnings received from IPSO are distributed to the relevant editorial staff as soon as possible together with legally privileged guidance, if appropriate.

Verification of Stories

Reach expects its staff to use their best endeavours to verify the stories that are put forward for publication. Stories involving potentially contentious issues are reviewed by the newsdesk and then legal/Code compliance advice is generally sought from the legal department before publication. Code compliance issues are also considered on our regional titles by Audience Directors and Editors if serious allegations are being made. Furthermore, journalists are encouraged to seek comment from the subjects of stories where appropriate.

Reach’s policy on provenance is as follows:

Provenance

Editorial executives on all our titles are reminded that it is their responsibility to understand the provenance of material, both words and pictures, and to satisfy themselves that it has been appropriately obtained.

Journalists have an obligation under IPSO’s Editors’ Code of Practice to protect their sources, but we also have a duty to establish that the sources we use are reliable. Protecting our journalists’ sources and insisting on knowing who our sources are, are not mutually exclusive.

Although they can delegate the authority where necessary, story provenance is ultimately the responsibility of the Editor.

In this area the Company relies on its integrity, experience and professionalism.

If there is an anonymous source, whether received internally or via an agency, the Editor must take this into account when making their judgement on

whether to publish and in doing so must ask pertinent questions and seek legal advice if necessary.

Although there may, in certain circumstances, be good reasons why the actual identity of a source is not known to the Editor, uncertainty as to provenance should in itself be a reason to question whether a story should be published.

It is usual journalistic practice to approach the subject matter of a story for comment before publication if serious allegations are being made by a third party. Further guidance is provided as stories are filtered through Content Editors, and if appropriate, legal advice is sought and taken.

Trust Project

25 of Reach's news websites were founder members of the Trust Project [thetrustproject.org], which was launched in November 2017 as an international initiative, having been set up from Santa Clara University. The project is supported by Google, Facebook and Twitter, and has brought media organisations across Europe and the Americas together to help readers make informed decisions about whether a news story is credible, quality journalism they can trust. Its three main commitments are "social responsibility, transparency and integrity". Fellow launch partners include the Washington Post, the Economist, the Globe and Mail, and La Stampa. Each participating website carries the Trust Project Logo next to IPSO's logo and includes:

- a letter from the editor explaining each site's coverage priorities, campaigning record and editorial ethos.
- an extended "About Us" page setting out journalistic values, key editors, ownership, funding, feedback and corrections and complaints mechanisms
- more information about Reach's writers, both on articles and on writer profile pages, reached by clicking on names shown in red at the top of stories.

A Reach representative continues to work closely with the Trust Project team to discuss and help agree international standards and frameworks as the project continues to expand.

An example of the “Letter from the Editor” is set out below:

Letter from the Editor

BusinessLive is a new national digital brand from Reach, launched in 2019 - and it's focused on news about businesses from across the regions.

We'll offer the best coverage of local business markets and of key business sectors nationally, from manufacturing to property and everything in between.

BusinessLive will shine a spotlight on the entrepreneurs, the stars of the future and the small firms that are the backbone of our economy.

We want to inspire business through trusted local and national content in uncertain times. We'll give our readers the news and information they need to do business locally and nationally. And we'll explain what's happening in the business world, telling the stories behind the headlines.

We're giving our great local business content a national platform that's inspiring, informed and inquisitive. And I hope you'll enjoy it.

Alistair Houghton
Editor - BusinessLive

Ethics policy

High editorial standards are at the core of BusinessLive's business philosophy.

Reach PLC, BusinessLive's parent company, is a member of and is regulated by IPSO, the Independent Press Standards Organisation.

Our journalists work according to The Editors' Code of Practice, which sets the benchmark for ethical standards in journalism and is enforced by IPSO.

On joining Reach, all editorial staff complete a training course in the Code and legal refresher training.

At BusinessLive, we recognise that protecting the rights of the individual consistently comes into conflict with the public's right to know. This means we have to make difficult judgements, sometimes quickly, which are impossible to get right all of the time. Regular bulletins and seminars give staff the best

opportunity to learn from mistakes, whether our own or those of other parts of the media industry.

We are a launch partner of The Trust Project, an international initiative to make it easier for readers to find out more about the organisations and the people providing them with news, and to support quality journalism.

Verification and fact checking

We expect our staff to use their best endeavours to verify the stories being put forward for publication.

Unnamed sources

Journalists have an obligation under IPSO's Editors' Code of Practice to protect their sources, but we also have a duty to establish that the sources we use are reliable and that material has been appropriately obtained. Story provenance is ultimately the responsibility of the Editor.

When using unnamed sources, the company relies on the integrity, experience and professionalism of its staff.

Corrections Policy

If you believe a story we have published is inaccurate, please contact the editorial team. You can:

Email: businesslive@reachplc.com

Phone: 0151 472 2449

Write to Alistair Houghton, BusinessLive, 5 St Pauls Square, Liverpool, L3 9SJ

Once verified, we will correct the story on the website as soon as possible. Where appropriate, the fact a correction has been made will be noted on the story and/or on the corrections and clarifications page.

If you have an issue about how BusinessLive has written about you personally or has treated you and wish to make a formal complaint over a potential breach of the Editor's Code of Practice, please see Reach PLC's Complaints Policy and Procedure.

You can also contact IPSO for advice.

4.2 Complaints Handling Process⁵

Reach seeks to resolve complaints as quickly and amicably as possible when a mistake has been recognised, but will also defend its journalism when it believes that there has been no breach of the Code. In any event, Reach strives to reply to all complainants in a timely and courteous manner, regardless of the merits of the complaint.

Reach receives complaints from the public through several avenues: indirectly via IPSO referrals, directly via its Complaints Form (in accordance with its Formal Internal Complaints Process), and informally by telephone and/or email and from solicitors writing “letters before claim” in advance of legal proceedings.

4.2.1 Formal Internal Complaints Process

4.2.1.1 Print

Every Reach printed news publication sets out details about its Complaints Process on page 2⁶ of each edition in a column entitled “Corrections & Complaints”. The column includes a link to Reach’s “How To Make A Complaint” process, which is hosted on Reach’s website, www.reachplc.com. The website also hosts our Complaints Policy, the Code and our online Complaints Form.

The column also informs readers of Reach’s IPSO membership, together with IPSO’s contact details for advice, if required. Those complainants who do not have internet access are provided with an address to send off for a “Complaints Pack”, which includes a copy of our Complaints Policy, the Code and our Complaints Form.

Readers who wish to bring a factual error to our attention are directed to either the Editor or Readers’ Editor, who will arrange prompt corrections of admitted inaccuracies. In the overwhelming majority of cases, corrections, clarifications and/or apologies will appear either in the Corrections & Complaints column or elsewhere on Page 2.⁶

⁵ Pursuant to Clause 3.3.4 of the SMA

(<https://www.ipso.co.uk/media/1292/ipso-scheme-membership-agreement-2016-for-website.pdf>)

⁶ (or as close to page 2 as possible if this is not possible for layout-related reasons, e.g. if there is a full page advertisement on page 2)

4.2.1.2 Online

Every Reach website carries a link on its home page, which sets out not only a link to Reach's Complaints Process, but also directs readers to email addresses where they can address issues about both simple, online factual errors and non-editorial matters. Each homepage also links to a "Corrections and Clarifications" section. Some corrections or amendments may however, in certain circumstances, be published underneath the original online article as a footnote clarification or correction.

4.2.2 Process

Once a Complaints Form is received, the matter is handled by the Legal Department. The complaint is assessed to determine whether the Code has been engaged, whether there has been a misinterpretation of the Code and/or whether the complaint is vexatious.

Examples of complaints that would not engage the Code could be the non-delivery of a newspaper or an issue arising from a reader offer or competition. In any event, this kind of complaint would be directed to the appropriate department and a response issued.

An example of misinterpretation of the Code could be a complaint made under Clause 4 (intrusion into grief or shock) from a reader concerned about a general report (with which the complainant has no personal connection) about, for instance, a natural disaster. Another example could be a complaint made under Clause 12 from a reader objecting to the portrayal of a football team, i.e. these would be complaints about editorial matters that purport to engage the Code but upon analysis, do not.

Vexatious complainants include those who use insulting language or who do not set out the nature of their complaint under the Code.

In any event, if a correct contact address is provided, Reach endeavours to reply to all complainants within seven days.

If a complaint engages the Code, the matter is investigated internally and a response is sent. The response will either reject the complaint, if Reach is satisfied that there has been no breach of the Code, or, if there is a matter

that does need addressing, discussions will then be held with the complainant in an attempt to resolve the matter.

If the matter cannot be resolved between the parties, the complainant is offered the option to refer the matter to IPSO to investigate.

4.2.3 Referrals From IPSO

The receipt of new complaints referred to Reach publications by IPSO engages Clause 13 of The Regulations. As part of its internal Complaints Procedure, Reach corresponds directly with the complainant to address the issues at hand as set out above. If no resolution can be reached, the matter is referred back to IPSO for its consideration.

4.2.4 Informal Complaints

Many complaints are dealt with directly by the Editor or a senior journalist following telephone calls or emails. In the vast majority of cases, this is the most appropriate, expedient and amicable way of resolving complaints.

4.2.5 Legal Complaints

All legal complaints (classified as complaints which are accompanied by a demand for a financial remedy and refer to a cause of action) are handled by the Legal Department separately.

4.2.6 Recording Of Complaints

Complaints that are received by Reach either through its Complaints Form or from IPSO are recorded and assessed with regard to whether the Code has been engaged and which clauses have been addressed. Although complaints received on an informal basis throughout the regions are generally logged, given the minor nature of many issues and the disparate way these complaints are received and dealt with (orally, by telephone, letter, email etc.), it would be disproportionate for these types of complaints to be formally assessed in terms of the Code. The most important factor is that complaints are addressed, and if possible, resolved as quickly as possible.

4.3 Training Process

From autumn 2014, Reach consulted with the Press Association (PA) and training company Eliesha over the creation of an online learning course with the purpose of making sure that all Reach journalists have a full understanding of the Code and the changes introduced by IPSO. This compulsory course was rolled out and completed by all Reach editorial staff (from Editors and Executives to trainees) across the company in February and March 2015.

Following the acquisition of the Northern and Shell titles, Reach has reviewed this part of its training programme and a new in-house compulsory online course was created and introduced in December 2020 for completion by all editorial staff. The course contains nine animated and narrated modules covering all 16 Clauses of the Code. After viewing each module, editorial staff must complete a multiple choice assessment. Participants must score 100% in the assessment before they can move on to the next module and the course is only completed after the 100% pass mark has been achieved in all modules. Going forward, all new starters to the Editorial teams will be required to complete this course

Further, as part of continuing legal and regulatory education for journalists and to provide legal advice, since March 2017, a series of regular Legal and IPSO Bulletins have been sent to all staff, including Northern and Shell titles from January 2019. These privileged and confidential Bulletins detail any substantial compliance, legal or Code issues that have arisen during the previous weeks both within the company and from the industry generally, so that journalists can be made aware of, look out for and deal with similar issues that may arise in the future.

4.4 Our Record On Compliance

During the Relevant Period, Reach published over one million articles online, and over eight hundred and fifty thousand articles in its National and Regional print titles.

In 2020, Reach received a total of 158 direct complaints through its online Complaints form. 58 of those complaints were resolved, and 60 were rejected outright as a non breach of the Code. 40 of these complaints were misinterpretations of the Code. Settlement of a complaint does not necessarily indicate an admitted breach of the Code. Many of these resolved direct complaints did not represent a breach of the Code, however were resolved by offering a gesture of goodwill, for example the removal of information or the article.

Furthermore, Reach received a total of 157 new complaints that were either referred to IPSO (i.e. following a direct complaint through our complaints form that was not resolved), or were received directly from IPSO. This report covers all upheld IPSO adjudications published in the Relevant Period.

There were 12 upheld adjudications in total within the Relevant Period, 2 where there was a requirement to publish the full adjudication, 10 where there was a requirement to publish a correction, and 10 upheld adjudications where the Complaints Committee ruled that sufficient remedial action had been offered by the publication. 22 complaints were not upheld by the Committee, 106 were settled, 12 were abandoned by the complainant and the rest were still under investigation/pending at the end of the Relevant Period.

4.4.1 Remedial Action

When adjudication is upheld with a requirement to publish the adjudication, if appropriate, the matter is mentioned in the privileged and confidential monthly legal bulletin with advice on what went wrong (if any wrongdoing is identified). Furthermore, such as those set out below, the Editor, Content Editor, and the journalist are informed of the outcome and the journalist is spoken to about the issue that had been identified. Details of upheld adjudications, published and adjudicated upon in the Relevant Period, are set out below:

4.4.2 Upheld Complaints With A Requirement To Publish The Adjudication

09539-19 A Woman v Hull Daily Mail

An online article headlined 'Kids entertainer 'Bobby Bubbles' sexually abused child who 'thought she was in love with him' included a photograph of 'Bobby Bubbles' alongside two children, a boy and a girl. Neither of the children within this photograph were victims, and the faces of the children were pixelated. The article also appeared in print, however did not feature the disputed photograph. The mother complained that the children had been identified by peers, ultimately implying that one of the pixelated children was the victim. The publication argued that as the article stated that the victim was now an adult and that she now had 'a daughter of her own', it was clear that the pixelated child was not the victim. The Committee considered that the publication of the image had represented an unnecessary intrusion into their time at school in breach of Clause 6(i) and (iii) and required the

publication to publish the full adjudication online, to appear on the homepage for 24 hours.

Date decision issued: 22/04/2020

Further comment: This adjudication was addressed in the monthly legal bulletin, and it has been emphasised that simply pixelating an image does not mean it is safe, especially in the circumstances of a sensitive story and when a child's welfare is involved.

07867-19 Transparency Project v Daily Express

The article was published as part of a campaign by the publication which called on MPs to pass a bill to remove parental rights of fathers of children conceived through rape and for an enquiry into how the "Family Court handles cases of domestic violence against women and girls in child arrangement cases" and reported a series of accusations from the mother. A third party complained that the article was inaccurate, had failed to make clear the findings of the court and omitted the core conclusions of the case, that following various trials, the woman's accounts were not true and the father had been expressly vindicated of wrongdoing. The publication denied that the article breached Clause 1. It said that the headline appeared in quotation marks and was clearly presented as the woman's own opinion on her case. The Committee found that the newspaper had failed to take care not to publish inaccurate information in breach of Clause 1(i), and as the publication did not make any offer to correct this information and there was a further breach of Clause 1(ii) and required the publication to publish the adjudication.

Date decision issued: 04/05/2020

Further comment: This adjudication was addressed in the monthly legal bulletin. IPSO originally rejected this complaint. It is important not to take someone's claims as the truth without corroboration, particularly if the allegations are serious, and that an earlier resolution is always beneficial.

4.4.3 Upheld Complaints With A Requirement To Publish A Correction

03497-19 Club 1872 v www.dailyrecord.co.uk

An online article reported “that survivor groups had warned of a growing problem in Scottish football whereby chants and explicit banners about child abuse had featured at matches” and described that “Banners showing sex acts being performed have also appeared at other stadiums” including Ibrox. The article also included comments from a member of a childhood abuse organisation who said “Recent football matches have seen a lot of these disgusting chants. There have also been banners with pictures of priests abusing young boys.” The complainant denied that the described banner had appeared at Ibrox Stadium. The Committee found that, although it could not be shown that no banner existed, because we had reported the banner’s presence as fact in one sentence of the article, instead of a claim, it was a breach of the Code on the basis it was a substantial inaccuracy.

Date decision issued: 20/12/2019

Further comment: We requested a review of this decision as it ultimately revolved around one omission of the term ‘alleged’ within one sentence of the article, but our appeal was rejected. This decision was addressed in the monthly bulletin published, but Reach remains concerned with the decision in terms of proportionality and context, given the enormous overall public interest of the story, which correctly reported an emotive and sensitive subject.

05869-19 Begum v Daily Mirror

The article reported that “record numbers of children” would “face school holiday hunger during the long summer break” and that “around 50,000 youngsters from disadvantaged homes will get free meals and activities inside schools as the Government quadrupled funding to tackle the crisis” and included a photograph of three children sat at a table eating at a summer club in Tower Hamlets. The complainant was a mother of one of the photographed children and complained that the article gave the misleading impression that her children were poor and hungry. The publication was invited to the club by the local council, and the club was specifically described to the publication as a “club which alleviates some of the

pressures families face during the school holiday period when free school meals are unavailable". The council's press release for the club provided details about child poverty rates in Tower Hamlets and the statistics for eligibility for receiving free school meals. Furthermore, the mother had signed a consent form providing permission for photographs of her children to be taken and used for the purpose of promoting the holiday club, therefore the publication did not accept that there was a breach of the Code, however it removed the photograph as a gesture of goodwill. The Committee found that because the newspaper had not taken any steps to verify that the children appearing in the photograph were attending for these specific reasons, rather than for the activities which were also offered at the club, there was a breach of Clause 1 and Clause 6 and the publication was required to publish a correction.

Date decision issued: 20/12/2019

Further comment: This adjudication was addressed in the monthly legal bulletin. The importance of seeking consent regarding a photograph of a child for the purposes of an article involving their welfare has been emphasised and communicated with the team.

01679-17 Sharp v Daily Record

A series of articles both online and in print reported claims of stalking and photoshopped images on Twitter, but were reported as fact by the publication on the basis the complainant had been charged. Unfortunately, one of the alleged victims withdrew the complaint with the police, so the complainant was not convicted of any charges in relation to this particular person. The complainant complained that it was inaccurate to report these allegations as fact. The Committee found a breach of Clause 1(iii) (failure to distinguish between comment conjecture and fact) and the publication was required to to publish a front page reference to correction on Page 2 and a correction on 3 online articles.

Date decision issued: 22/04/2020

Further comment: Given the complainant's conviction, the sanction for the breach was severe in the circumstances. However, the ruling was mentioned in the bulletin, and the publication was reminded that unless there is irrefutable evidence that something is true, it should be framed as an allegation or a claim, even with a credible witness or source.

07156-19 Walters v www.express.co.uk

The online article headlined “Why are Man City fans booing Liverpool star James Milner in Vincent Kompany testimonial?” reported that footballer James Milner had been “*booed by a smattering of Manchester City supporters when he touched the ball during Vincent Kompany’s testimonial.*” However, Mr Milner did not play at Mr Kompany’s testimonial and it was therefore impossible that he had been booed by fans. The publication accepted that the article was inaccurate, explained that that the article had been prewritten, based on previous games in which Mr Milner had been booed by Manchester City fans, and accidentally published. The publication agreed to publish an online correction, however, the Committee found that the correction contained additional information regarding the previous times Mr Milner had been booed and that the inclusion of this information, which was not required to correct the inaccuracy, further obscured the position. As such, there was a breach of Clause 1(ii), and a new correction was required to be published.

Date decision issued: 30/04/2020

Further comment: This adjudication was addressed in the monthly legal bulletin. The publication and Editor were reminded of the importance of publishing a suitable and factual correction, rather than a defensive one.

00583-20 Giblin-Jowett v www.express.co.uk

The online article was headlined ‘*Ridiculous EU laws Britain has been forced to accept from Brussels – EIGHT of the worst*’ and reported on “eight examples of EU laws or rules” that the UK was “forced” to adopt by the EU and “had to abide by”. The complainant said that the article was inaccurate for a number of reasons. The publication accepted that the article contained an inaccuracy and offered to amend the online article and add a footnote clarification, however the publication did not accept any of the other inaccuracies that the complainant has suggested. The Committee found that two of the other points raised represented a breach of Clause 1 and required the publication to amend the online article and publish a footnote correction.

Date decision issued: 30/06/2020

Further comment: The publication was satisfied that the disputed matters were accurate, and the complainant disagreed. The publication and Editor were notified of the decision.

09479-20 Nulty v Daily Express

The article was an opinion piece which reported on the attempt to agree on a trade deal between the UK and the EU during the coronavirus crisis. It finished by reporting that “it looks like World Trade Organisation rules and so what? Canada and Australia trade with the EU and prosper without bowing and scraping. So that will do us nicely.” The complainant said that the article was inaccurate in breach of Clause 1 because it gave the inaccurate impression that the trading relationship between the EU and Australia and that between the EU and Canada were the same. He noted that it was misleading to suggest that both followed World Trade Organisation rules. The publication did not accept that there had been a breach of Clause 1. It said that the aim of the article was to state that a trading relationship similar to either Australia, Canada or the World Trade Organisation rules would work for the UK. It said that nowhere in the article did it report that the Australian and Canadian models were identical, and amended the online article to further clarify and added a footnote clarification as a gesture of goodwill. The Committee considered that the publication did not take the necessary care to report on the trade relationship between the EU and Australia and the EU and Canada and required the publication to publish a correction in print.

Date decision issued: 11/09/2020

Further comment: The news editors had a discussion regarding this decision and highlighted the importance of fact checking picture captions if we are making allegations.

02581-20 Tarman v mirror.co.uk

The online article headlined 'Cyclists ignore UK coronavirus lockdown rules as they ride together in the sun' included a photograph of six cyclists with the caption: “*Cyclists exercise in close proximity today in Regent's Park in central London*”. The complainant, one of the cyclists pictured in the main image, said that the article was misleading as to his actions and observance of social distancing guidelines. This was an oversight caused by too much focus on the article and not enough on the picture caption. The publication offered an online clarification to make clear that the headline did not refer “directly” to the photograph of the cyclists. However, the Committee found that this was not sufficient as it did not address the picture caption, and required the publication to publish a new correction.

Date decision issued: 16/10/2020

Further comment: This adjudication was addressed in the monthly bulletin and the relevant news Editors had a discussion regarding this decision and the importance of fact checking picture captions if we are making allegations.

10490-20 Devlin v www.dailyrecord.co.uk

An online article headlined: 'Nicola Sturgeon's joy as she reunites with parents in socially distanced visit after three months of lockdown' reported on Nicola Sturgeon's first reunion with her parents since the lockdown restrictions eased. The online article included a historic photograph of Nicola Sturgeon with her arms around both her parents, and was correctly captioned "First Minister Nicola Sturgeon with her [named] parents before the Covid-19 outbreak". The article was also published on Daily Record's Facebook Page, with the headline shortened to "Nicola Sturgeon's joy as she reunites with parents after three months apart", and included the same photograph, however no picture caption was present in the social post. The complainant said that the Facebook post was inaccurate because it gave the misleading impression that the photograph was taken when Ms Sturgeon met her parents for the first time after lockdown. He said that this suggested that Ms Sturgeon had put her arm around her parents when she met them after lockdown, and therefore failed to socially distance and breached Scottish coronavirus restrictions. The Committee agreed and required the publication to publish a correction on Daily Record's Facebook Page.

Date decision issued: 17/11/2020

Further comment: This issue was disappointing as the original story was factually and editorially sound. However, this was addressed in the monthly bulletin issued and the importance of taking care when shortening an online story for Social Media and the issue of how the post was presented was discussed with the relevant team and Editor.

12226-20 Coutts v Daily Star Sunday

The small article headlined "KILLER FRYING IT ON" reported that a man currently serving a life sentence for murder wanted compensation because his prison did not serve enough chips. The article was based on an open blog post published by the complainant, titled "FOOD: PLEASE SIR, CAN I HAVE SOME MORE?", in which he described that he had been served half of his lunch, that

this was not the first time this had happened, and that “Now, [the prison has] started rationing the portion size of chips!”. The complainant suggested that the article was inaccurate as he was bringing a case against the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) because he had not received half of his lunch, and not because the prison did not serve enough chips, however the publication did not accept that this represented a significant inaccuracy. The Committee found that although the blog made a comment about the portion sizes of chips being reduced, it was clear that the complainant was not pursuing the case because the prison did not serve enough chips. therefore represented a failure to take care, and required the publication to publish a correction.

Date decision issued: 02/12/2020

Further comment: The size of the article meant that there was not enough space to publish the blog in full, however it is acknowledged that further care should have been taken in terms of the accuracy.

08136-20 Mitchison v www.express.co.uk

An article headlined '*Lib Dems admit Brexit policy a 'high speed car crash' in humiliating secret memo*' reported that the Liberal Democrat's “disastrous general election campaign had been compared to a 'high-speed car crash', according to a damning internal party enquiry”. The complainant said that it was inaccurate to refer to the report as “secret”, as it had been voluntarily published on the Party's website and therefore could not legitimately be considered to be secret. The publication said that it was not inaccurate to refer to the report as “secret” in the headline as the Party had not shared the report on its official social media channels, despite there being six other articles shared on its official Twitter account that day, and four further articles the following day. The publication said that the Party had chosen to not make the report widely publicised and accessible and therefore it did not accept that it was inaccurate to report that the memo was “secret” in these circumstances. The Committee considered that the publication had failed to take care to publish a headline supported by the text and ruled that a correction should be published and the headline amended to reflect that the memo was not secret in order to put the correct position on record.

Date decision issued: 03/12/2020

Further comment: This decision was addressed in the monthly bulletin. Reference to the term ‘secret’ and the importance of accurate headlines was discussed with the online Editor.

4.4.4 Upheld Adjudications Where Sufficient Remedial Action Had Been Offered

06492-19 Kruft v www.express.co.uk

The article headlined “Brexit betrayal: Johnson launches ruthless bid to ORDER rebel John Bercow’s departure” reported on the Conservative Party’s plan to replace the Speaker by fielding an alternative candidate for election in his constituency and stated that ‘Hammond was, however, removed from Parliament after Mr Johnson became Prime Minister.’ The complainant said that the article was inaccurate for two reasons, one being that the Prime Minister cannot ‘order’ the removal of the Speaker, and the other being that Mr Hammond resigned from the Government Cabinet, rather than ‘removed’. The publication accepted that the article was inaccurate and amended the headline, the disputed statement, and added a footnote correction to reflect the changes made. The complainant did not accept the changes made, however the Committee found that the changes made were sufficient to correct the significant inaccuracies and no further action needed to be taken.

Date decision issued: 15/01/2020

Further comment: The importance of correcting an article promptly was acknowledged by the Editor.

05294-19 Stainer v Folkestone Herald

The online version of the article headlined “Former director of The Grand in Folkestone accused of sending 'false information' about resident” reported on the complainant’s court appearance after he had been “accused of knowingly sending ‘false information’ about one of the building’s residents“. The complainant said that the headline was inaccurate as he believed that the headline had suggested that a third party, such as the police or Crown Prosecution Service, had “accused” him, when actually it was the alleged victim who had privately brought the case, and that it was inaccurate to say that he had been “charged” when it was a summons. The publication agreed to amend the online article as a gesture of goodwill, in addition to publishing a clarification in print. The complainant did not accept that this resolved his complaint, however the Committee found that the amendments and clarification were offered promptly and with due prominence and no further action was required.

Date decision issued: 28/02/20

Further comment: This case emphasised the importance of offering further clarification on the articles promptly

07929-19 Dunn v Liverpool Echo

An article headlined “Graffiti slur seen prior to attack” reported on the attack and subsequent death of the complainant’s brother, and stated that “disturbing and unpleasant graffiti” had appeared “just before the attack”. The complainant said that the article was inaccurate as it suggested a link between the graffiti and the attack, and also that in any event, it was inaccurate to state that the graffiti appeared ‘just before the attack’ as it had actually appeared 4 months previously. The publication demonstrated that there had been speculation between the graffiti and the attack being linked; however after the article had been published, the Police confirmed that there was no connection. Furthermore, the publication was also able to demonstrate that they were told by a friend that the graffiti appeared ‘one month’ before the attack, and had notes of such comments. The publication offered to publish a correction on the points now confirmed both online and in print, however the complainant rejected this offer. The Committee found that the correct position was offered promptly and with due prominence, and required the publication to publish the wording offered.

Date decision issued: 18/03/2020

Further comment: Although the publication did not accept a breach of the Code, the necessity of correcting any inaccuracies was addressed with the Editor.

08980-19 Tweddle v www.chroniclelive.co.uk

An article headlined “Estranged father and son in court on same day for separate drink drive offences” reported on a father and son “who didn’t often speak” being “called to court on the same day for separate drink drive offences”. The complainants (both father and son), said that it was inaccurate to state that they were “estranged” as they said that they had a close relationship, and that no comment was made on their relationship during the course of their separate proceedings. While the publication accepted that it had not been heard during formal proceedings, the journalist had heard the solicitor for both defendants saying that “they don’t speak much” in a conversation with the clerk, usher and

prosecutor. However, the publication offered to remove reference to 'estranged' as a gesture of goodwill, and add a footnote correction reflecting this change. The complainants did not accept this, however the Committee found that the claim that the two men were "estranged" was significant as the nature of the relationship between the two men was central to the article, and that the offered correction was published with sufficient promptness and prominence to meet the terms of Clause 1.

Date decision issued: 15/04/2020

Further comment: The publication was unable to demonstrate reference of the conversation between the solicitor, clerk, usher and prosecutor. This was addressed with the journalist and Editor.

08998-19 Kafetzis v www.birminghammail.co.uk

The article headlined "Funky Bear restaurant in Tamworth closes down just days after owner called diner 'a d***head'" reported on an online exchange between a member of staff at a restaurant and a customer following a poor review left by the customer on a reviewing website. The article named the complainant as the owner of the article, and stated that he had responded to a review by insulting the customer. The complainant advised that this comment was actually left by another staff member. Although the publication noted that the complainant had been involved in two previous incidents, it accepted that in this case it was inaccurate to attribute the comments to the complainant. The publication did also attempt to contact the complainant for comment before the article was published. Upon receipt of the complaint, the publication removed the online article, and published a standalone correction and apology, which appeared on the website's homepage for 24 hours. The Committee found that the correction clearly put the correct position on record, and was offered promptly and with due prominence.

Date decision issued: 20/02/2020

Further comment: This breach was a result of human error, however the publication accepts that further care should have been taken.

09159-19 Fair Play For Women v www.kentlive.news

The article headlined "Katie Hopkins epically shut down after rant about Kent transgender woman" reported on a Tweet posted by Katie Hopkins that related

to a transwoman cricketer who had won “club women’s player of the year” and that the cricketer’s “impressive club appearances have been clouded by transphobic abuse from the group Fair Play for Women”. The complainant said that Fair Play For Women had not ‘abused’ the cricketer with transphobic comments, but had merely commented on whether biological males who identified as women should be eligible to play in women’s cricket teams. The publication noted that the “abuse” referenced in the article consisted of Tweets in which Fair Play for Women had referred to the cricketer as “male” and asked for sports professionals and women to “speak up NOW”. Although the publication did not accept that the article was inaccurate, it removed the disputed sentence as a gesture of goodwill from the online article, and offered to add a statement from the complainant. The Committee found that the article had asserted as fact that Fair Play For Women had engaged in transphobic abuse, but because the article had not made clear that this was the publication’s characterisation based on comments made on social media, this resulted in the article being significantly misleading and represented a failure to take care. However, it was accepted by the Committee that the amendment of the online article and correction/statement was offered promptly.

Date decision issued: 21/04/2020

Further comment: Although publication did not agree that the article was inaccurate, the importance of promptly offering a possible resolution was recognised.

00041-20 Smith v www.express.co.uk

The article headlined “Labour’s inheritance tax horror plan to raid 10 million Britons’ life savings” reported on comments made by a politician, who said that his party was considering reforming the current inheritance tax system, and specifically, that under the current scheme, “640,000 household of the 27.2 million households in the UK pay the tax each year”. The complainant said that the article was inaccurate to state that 640,000 households paid inheritance tax each year, and provided HMRC figures which showed that 24,500 estates paid the tax each year. The publication expressed that the figure of 640,000 had been widely reported, however amended the article and added a footnote correction. The Committee found that the correction was offered promptly and that the wording was sufficient.

Date decision issued: 29/05/2020

Further comment: The Editor and journalist were spoken to with regard to the reliance on information in the public domain without independently verifying the facts, especially when the correct information was openly available.

00042-20 McAnena v www.mirror.co.uk

The article headlined “Transgender musician cancels gig after being 'banned' from using women's toilet” reported on a musician’s experience at a music venue, who was a transgender woman, and was told that they could not use the women’s bathroom and had to use the disabled facilities. The article reported as fact that the Equality Act states “that establishments that provide separate services for women and men are required to treat transsexual people in the same way as the gender they present as.” The complainant said that this was inaccurate, as the Equality Act does allow transgender persons to be excluded from single sex spaces that correlate to their gender identity, if it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. The publication accepted that it had misinterpreted the Equality Act and amended the article accordingly, and added a footnote correction to reflect this change. The Committee found that the correction was sufficient to correct the significant inaccuracies and no further action needed to be taken.

Date decision issued: 03/01/2020

Further comment: This was a difficult and complicated complaint in light of the interpretation of the Act. However, the publication promptly accepted that the Act had been misreported and offered to correct it immediately.

00665-20 Enticknap v The Gazette

The article headlined “Glum-looking pimp used threats to keep his sex enterprise secret” reported on the complainant’s sentencing hearing and included details of him using “blackmail to avoid justice and stop his prostitutes leaving”; that he had “on at least one occasion blackmailed the victim to prevent her contacting police”. The article also included a quote from North Yorkshire Police stating that “he used the threat of blackmail to avoid being brought to justice.” The complainant advised that the charge of blackmail had been subsequently dropped and he had not been found guilty of it. In light of this, the publication amended the online article and added a footnote correction. However, the Committee found that as the press release relied on by the publication was contradictory, being that it explained that an allegation had been made that the complainant had blackmailed one of his victims and later stated, without qualification, that he had blackmailed the victim on at least one occasion, and that the charges that the complainant had pleaded guilty to were made clear in the press release, and that this did not include a charge of blackmail, that in fact there was a breach of Clause 1 as the status the blackmail allegation was not clear for the press release and the publication should have taken further care to establish the status of such charge. As the article was amended promptly, the Committee found that no further remedial action was required.

Date decision issued: 14/05/2020

Further comment: This was a frustrating decision because a publication should be able to rely on information released by a public body, namely the Police force, but it was accepted by the publication that further care could have been taken in order to clarify the charges.

02767-20 Henshaw v www.nottinghampost.co.uk

The article headlined “Man charged with multiple offences after alleged assault in Stapleford” reported on a recent incident of a man being charged with dangerous driving and driving without insurance and possession of cannabis. The article included a photograph of a police car and cordon, and a grey vehicle which appeared to have crashed into a barricade also visible in the photograph. The photograph was taken from a social media post from the Police, which described it as ‘an incident in Stapleford’. The complainant, who owned the grey vehicle, complained as the accident depicted in the photo had no connection to the story concerning dangerous driving, yet he had been identified by friends and family by the vehicle, and was wrongly associated with the charges set out in the story. Once the Police had confirmed to the publication that the vehicle was unrelated, the photograph was removed from the online article and published a correction clarifying that the original vehicle depicted in the photograph was not related to the story. The Committee found that the correction was published promptly and therefore no further action was required.

Date decision issued: 07/08/2020

Further comment: This was another example where the publication relied on information published by a public body, however it was accepted that once again further care could have been taken to ensure that the ‘incident’ pictured in the Police’s social media post was in fact related to their separate press release.

5. Schedule

5.1 Annex A: List Of Reach Titles/Websites

5.1.1 Print

National

Daily Mirror
Sunday Mirror
Sunday People
Daily Record
Sunday Mail
OK!
new! Magazine
Daily Express
Sunday Express
Daily Star
Daily Star Sunday

Regional

Accrington Observer
Airdrie & Coatbridge Advertiser
Ashbourne News Telegraph
Ashford Herald
Atherstone & Colehill Herald (Tamworth Herald Series)
Ayrshire Post
Bangor Mail
Bath Chronicle

Birmingham Mail
Birmingham Post
Black Country Bugle Annual
Black Country Bugle Sports Annual
Blackmore Vale Magazine
Blairgowrie Advertiser
Boston Target

Brentwood Gazette
Bristol Post
Burry Port & Pembrey Star (Llanelli Star Series)
Burton Mail
Bygones (Scunthorpe & Grimsby)
Caernarfon & Denbigh Herald (Arfon)
Caernarfon & Denbigh Herald (South)
Cambridge News
Carmarthen Journal
Central Somerset Gazette (Mid Somerset Series)
Cheddar Valley Gazette (Mid Somerset Series)
Chester Chronicle (Frodsham & Helsby)
Chester Chronicle (Country)
Chester Chronicle (Flintshire)
Chester Chronicle (Sandbach & Middlewich)
Chronicle & Informer
City Guide (Staffordshire)
Cornish Guardian
Cornishman
Coventry Telegraph
Crewe Chronicle
Croydon Advertiser (Croydon Advertiser Series)
Cynon Valley Leader
Daily Mirror Northern Ireland
Daily Post
Derby Telegraph

Dorking Advertiser
Dover Express
Dumfries & Galloway Standard
Ealing Gazette
East Coast & Wolds Target
East Grinstead Courier
East Kilbride News
East Riding Mail
Essex Chronicle
Exeter Express & Echo
Flashback (Hull)
Folkestone Herald
Frome Standard (Mid Somerset Series)
Fulham Gazette
Gainsborough Echo
Galloway News
Glamorgan Gazette
Gloucester Citizen
Gloucestershire Echo
Greater Manchester Business Week Magazine
Grimsby Telegraph
Gwendraeth Valley Star (Llanelli Star Series)
Gwent Gazette
Hamilton Advertiser
Herald Express
Hertfordshire Mercury
Heywood Advertiser
Hinckley Times
Holyhead & Bangor Mail
Hounslow Chronicle & Informer
Huddersfield Daily Examiner
Hull Daily Mail
Irvine Herald
Isle of Thanet Gazette

Journal (Grimsby & Scunthorpe)
Journal (Hull)
Kent & Sussex Courier
Kilmarnock Standard
Leatherhead Advertiser
Leek Post & Times
Leicester Mercury
Lennox Herald
Lichfield Mercury
Lincolnshire Echo
Liverpool Echo
Liverpool Sunday Echo
Llanelli Star (Llanelli Star Series)
Loughborough Echo
Macclesfield Express
Manchester Evening News
Manchester Weekly News (Salford Edition)
Manchester Weekly News (Sale & Altrincham)
Manchester Weekly News (Stretford Urmston)
Manchester Weekly News (Stockport East)
Manchester Weekly News (Stockport West)
Manchester Weekly News (South Manchester)
Manchester Weekly News (Wilmslow)
Manchester Weekly News (Tameside)
Merthyr Express
Middleton Guardian
Midweek Visiter
Mid Devon Gazette
Nantwich Chronicle
Newcastle Chronicle
Newcastle Journal
News & Mail Series (Aldershot)
News & Mail Series (Camberley & Sandhurst)
News & Mail Series (Farnborough)

News & Mail Series (Fleet & Yateley)
North Devon Journal
North Wales Weekly News
North Wales Weekly News (Conwy Valley & Dyffryn
Conwy)
North Wales Weekly News (Colwyn Bay & Abergele)
Nottingham Post
Nuneaton News
Ormskirk Advertiser
Paisley Daily Express
Perthshire Advertiser
Plymouth Herald
Pontypridd & Llantrisant Observer
Remember When
Retford Gainsborough & Worksop Times
Rhondda Leader
Rhymney Valley Express
Rochdale Observer
Rossendale Free Press
Runcorn & Widnes Weekly News
Rutherglen Reformer
Scunthorpe Telegraph
Seven Oakes Chronicle
Shepton Mallet Journal (Mid Somerset Series)
Skelmersdale Advertiser
Sleaford Target
Somerset Standard & Guardian
South Cheshire Chronicle
South Wales Echo
South Wales Evening Post
Southport Visitor
Staffordshire Newsletter
Staines Chronicle & Informer
Stirling Observer

Stockport Express
Strathearn Herald
Sunday Echo
Sunday Mercury
Sunday Sun
Surrey Advertiser
Surrey Mirror
Sutton Coldfield Observer
Swansea Lie
Tamworth Herald (Tamworth Herald Series)
The Gazette (North East, Middlesbrough & Teesside)
The Stoke Sentinel
The Way We Were
The West Briton
The Wharf
Uxbridge Gazette
Wales On Sunday
Wells Journal (Mid Somerset Series)
West Lothian Courier
Western Daily Press
Western Gazette (Yeovil)
Western Gazette (Sherborne)
Western Gazette (Crewkerne, Chard and Ilminster)
Western Gazette (Somerton and Langport)
Western Gazette (Wincanton, Castle Cary, Bruton and Gillingham)
Western Mail
Western Morning News
Widnes Weekly News
Wishaw Press

5.1.2 Websites

www.belfastlive.co.uk
www.birminghammail.co.uk
www.birminghampost.co.uk
www.bristolpost.co.uk
www.business-live.co.uk
www.cambridge-news.co.uk
www.cheshire-live.co.uk
www.chroniclelive.co.uk
www.cornwalllive.com
www.coventrytelegraph.net
www.dailyexpress.co.uk
www.dailypost.co.uk
www.dailyrecord.co.uk
www.dailystar.co.uk
www.derbytelegraph.co.uk
www.devonlive.com
www.edinburghlive.co.uk
www.essexlive.news
www.examinerlive.co.uk⁷
www.football.london
www.footballscotland.co.uk
www.gazettelive.co.uk
www.getreading.co.uk
www.getsurrey.co.uk
www.glasgowlive.co.uk
www.gloucestershirelive.co.uk
www.grimsbytelegraph.co.uk
www.hampshirelive.news⁸
www.hertfordshiremercury.co.uk⁹

⁷ Rebrand to YorkshireLive in Feb 2020

⁸ News publication launched June 2020

⁹ Rebrand to HertsLive in March 2020

www.hulldailymail.co.uk
www.humberbusiness.com
www.insider.co.uk
www.inyourarea.co.uk/news
www.kentlive.news
www.lancs.live
www.leeds-live.co.uk
www.leicesterm Mercury.co.uk
www.lincolnshirelive.co.uk
www.liverpool.com
www.liverpoolecho.co.uk
www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk
www.mirror.co.uk
www.mylondon.news
www.nearlythereyet.co.uk
www.new-magazine.co.uk
www.northhantslive.news¹⁰
www.nottinghampost.com
www.ok.co.uk
www.plymouthherald.co.uk
www.scunthorpetelegraph.co.uk
www.somersetlive.co.uk
www.southwestbusiness.co.uk
www.staffordshire-live.co.uk
www.stokesentinel.co.uk
www.sussexlive.co.uk¹¹
www.walesonline.co.uk

¹⁰ New publication launched June 2020

¹¹ New publication launched June 2020